

IN THE CLAIMS

The following claim listing replaces all prior listings and versions of the claims:

The Following is a Complete Listing of the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A network system connected with multiple master devices, comprising:

a plurality of slave devices connected to a network that transmit and receive data through the network;

~~at least one a~~ master device ~~that is~~ configured to receive a control command ~~from a network manager~~ and to output state information in response to the control command to control the plurality of slave devices; and

a network manager configured to generate the control command and to that automatically assigns assign a network address to the ~~at least one~~ master device to connect the ~~at least one~~ master device to the network when the master device is ~~one of~~ newly connected to the network ~~and additionally connected to the network with which an existing master device is connected.~~

2. (Currently amended) The network system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the network manager comprises:

a master-device discriminator that determines whether the ~~at least one~~ master device is newly connected to the network and that determines whether a unique address is associated with the ~~at least one~~ master device;

a search packet transmitter that generates a search packet for searching for the unique address associated with the ~~at least one~~ master device and that transmits the

generated search packet to the ~~at least one~~ master device; and

an address notifier that transmits the unique address of the ~~at least one~~ master device to ~~all~~ a plurality of home appliances connected to the network.

3. (Currently amended) The network system as set forth in claim 2, wherein the address notifier comprises:

a plug-in notifier that notifies ~~all~~ the plurality of home appliances ~~connected to the network~~ of the unique address of the ~~at least one~~ master device when the unique address is searched and is found for the ~~at least one~~ master device; and

a specific address notifier that automatically generates a specific address when the search of the unique address is not successful and transmits a specific address notification packet for the notification of the generated specific address to ~~all~~ the plurality of home appliances ~~connected to the network~~.

4. (Currently amended) The network system as set forth in claim 3, wherein the specific address notifier automatically generates a specific address when a slave device is additionally connected to the network and transmits a specific address notification packet for the notification of the generated specific address to the ~~at least one~~ master device ~~connected to the network~~.

5. (Currently amended) The network system as set forth in claim 2, wherein the network manager further comprises:

a counter connected to the search packet transmitter that counts the number of

attempts to search for the unique address associated with the ~~at least one~~ master device.

6. (Currently amended) The network system as set forth in claim 5, wherein the counter comprises:

a ~~determinator~~ ~~comparator/determinator~~ that determines when the search of the unique address corresponding to the ~~at least one~~ master device is unsuccessful, ~~and that~~ further determines when the number of attempted searches ~~exceeds~~ exceed a predetermined number of searches; and

a specific address requestor that outputs a control signal to request the specific address notifier to automatically generate a specific address when the address search is determined by the ~~determinator~~ ~~comparator/determinator~~ to be unsuccessful.

7. (Currently amended) The network system as set forth in claim 2, wherein the network manager further comprises:

a data packet transmitter that generates a data packet containing state information of an existing master device and the plurality of slave devices connected to the network and transmits the generated data packet to ~~an additionally connected at least one~~ the master device and ~~an~~ the existing ~~at least one~~ master device, when the ~~at least one~~ master device is additionally connected to the network ~~with which the existing at least one master device has already been connected.~~

8. (Currently amended) A method of operating a network system connected with ~~one or more master devices;~~ at least one master device, the method comprising:

(a) connecting a new master device to a network with which a plurality of slave devices are connected;

(b) searching for a unique address associated with the master device; and

(c) notifying all a plurality of home appliances connected to the network that the master device having comprising the unique address has been appropriately connected to the network.

9. (Currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 8, wherein notifying further comprises:

(b-1) repeating a search of the unique address associated with the master device; and automatically generating a specific address and assigning the generated specific address to the master device when the search of the unique address is unsuccessful.

10. (Currently amended) A method of operating a network system connected with ~~one or more master devices;~~ at least one master device, the method comprising:

(a) connecting a ~~new~~ home appliance to a network with which a plurality of slave devices and an existing master device have been connected;

(b) notifying at least one of the plurality of slave devices ~~home appliances~~ that the ~~new~~ home appliance has been connected to the network by transmitting a unique address assigned to the ~~new~~ home appliance to the at least one of the plurality of slave devices ~~home appliances connected to the network;~~

(c) determining whether the ~~new~~ home appliance is a master device and transmitting, to the ~~new~~ home appliance, a data packet containing state information of at least one of the

~~plurality of slave devices home appliances connected to the network~~ when it is determined
that the new home appliance is the master device; and

(d) transmitting the data packet to the existing master device when the existing
master device ~~connected with the network~~ is used along with the ~~new~~ master device.

11. (Currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 10, wherein the
determining further comprises:

notifying ~~the~~ an additionally connected slave device of the unique address of the
master device ~~connected to the network~~ when the connected a slave device is ~~additionally~~
connected to the network.